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ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DS-00
	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01	VCE-00
	NEA-00	DCP-01	NSAE-00	PM-00	IRM-00	TEST-00	USIE-00
	SA-00	IIP-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	NFAT-00	SAS-00

/004W

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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4642  
INFO AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY  
ASEAN COLLECTIVE  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS HANOI 002946

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV AND EAP/RSP

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [VM](#) [ASEAN](#) [CTERR](#)

SUBJECT: VIETNAM RATES ASEAN MEETINGS "FULLY SUCCESSFUL"

REF: BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN 00716

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: VIETNAM WAS FULLY SATISFIED WITH THE  
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RESULTS OF THE ASEAN SUMMIT, ASEAN+3, AND ASEAN+1 MEETINGS  
IN BRUNEI NOVEMBER 5-6. MFA OFFICIALS CLAIMED THAT PM PHAN  
VAN KHAI TOOK THE INITIATIVE IN GETTING THE STRONG  
ENDORSEMENT OF EARLY RATIFICATION BY ALL MEMBERS OF THE 12  
CONVENTIONS AGAINST TERRORISM; TERRORISM IN GENERAL WAS ONE  
OF THE TWO MAJOR THEMES IDENTIFIED BY MFA AS DOMINATING THE  
TALKS. THE OTHER KEY TOPIC FROM VIETNAM'S PERSPECTIVE WAS  
HOW TO MINIMIZE THE EFFECT ON ASEAN'S FUTURE OF DIVERGENT  
ECONOMIC LEVELS AND GROWTH AMONG THE "OLD" AND "NEW"  
MEMBERS. VIETNAM RATED BRUNEI'S ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP  
AS GOOD. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) MFA ASEAN DEPARTMENT DEPTUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
PHAM HUU CHI MET WITH POL/C AND POLOFFS ON NOVEMBER 7  
FOLLOWING HIS RETURN FROM THE ASEAN MEETINGS IN BRUNEI. CHI  
CONFIRMED THAT MUCH OF THE SUMMIT'S DISCUSSIONS WERE  
CENTERED ON INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AND HOW TO COPE WITH IT.  
CHI SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN IMPRESSED THAT ASEAN, AN  
ORGANIZATION THAT HAD HISTORICALLY BEEN FAIRLY WED TO A PRE-  
DETERMINED AGENDA PLANNED MONTHS IN ADVANCE, HAD BEEN ABLE  
SO QUICKLY TO INCORPORATE A FOCUS ON THIS TOPIC AFTER THE  
EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 11. HE CLAIMED THAT PM KHAI MADE A PUSH  
TO URGE ALL MEMBERS TO RATIFY ALL 12 CONVENTIONS AGAINST  
TERRORISM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND WAS ALSO INSTRUMENTAL IN  
PUTTING FORWARD THE SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL THAT ASEAN CONVENE  
MINISTERIAL CONFERENCES AT THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND INTERIOR  
MINISTER LEVELS, PROBABLY IN FEBRUARY AND APRIL  
RESPECTIVELY, TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT THREAT AND CONCRETE  
MEASURES TO COUNTER TERRORISM. HE ADDED THAT PM KHAI ALSO  
PROPOSED CREATION OF AN ASEAN COORDINATION CENTER IN ORDER  
TO BE ABLE TO IMPROVE LIAISON WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH OTHER  
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LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES SUCH AS INTERPOL. EVENTUALLY,  
MEMBER STATES MIGHT ASSIGN A LIAISON OFFICER TO THEIR  
OVERSEAS EMBASSIES IN EACH OTHERS' COUNTRIES, HE DESCRIBED.

[1](#)3. (SBU) CHI CLAIMED THAT THE LEADERS DID NOT/NOT DISCUSS  
THE ISSUE OF COALITION MILITARY ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN, AND  
THAT NONE OF THE LEADERS HAD ADVOCATED A STATEMENT OF  
SUPPORT FOR ONGOING ACTIONS BY THE US AND THE INTERNATIONAL  
COALITION. HE SAID THAT THE LEADERS FOCUSED ON COUNTER-  
MEASURES AGAINST TERRORISM IN THE REGION INSTEAD.

[1](#)4. (SBU) ACCORDING TO CHI, LEADERS DISCUSSED CONCERNS ABOUT  
ASEAN'S FUTURE GIVEN DEVELOPMENTAL GAPS BETWEEN THE "OLD"  
AND "NEW" MEMBERS. CHI STATED THAT ASEAN COULD NOT "MOVE  
FORWARD IF NEIGHBORS ARE TOO POOR." HE CITED THE DISPARITY  
BETWEEN THAILAND AND MYANMAR AS A CASE IN POINT. CHI NOTED  
PARTICULAR GAPS WITHIN ASEAN REGARDING INFRASTRUCTURE  
(INCLUDING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY) AND HUMAN RESOURCES

DEVELOPMENT. HE SAID THE LEADERS HAD ALSO DISCUSSED THE NEED TO PROMOTE INTRA-ASIAN TRADE ESPECIALLY GIVEN THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN. HE POINTED TO CAMBODIAN PRIME MINISTER HUN SEN'S PROPOSAL TO CREATE ANOTHER GROWTH TRIANGLE FOR THE MEKONG REGION AS AN EXAMPLE. LEADERS ALSO DISCUSSED THE NEED TO COMPLETE SINGAPORE-KUNMING RAIL LINKS (VIA CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM).

15. (U) CHI NOTED VIETNAM'S SATISFACTION WITH THE PROPOSAL TO BRING CHINA INTO THE ASEAN FREE TRADE AREA BUT NOTED THAT IT COULD TAKE UP TO TEN YEARS TO ACCOMPLISH. MINISTRIES OF TRADE WILL BE EXPLORING THE MODALITIES OF THIS PROPOSAL, HE SAID.

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16. (SBU) CHI EXPLAINED THAT LEADERS HAD DISCUSSED, WITHOUT CONCLUSION, THE IDEA OF AN ASEAN SUMMIT WITH INDIA, ON AN ANNUAL OR BIENNIAL BASIS. HE SAID THAT SOUTH KOREA, WITH SUPPORT FROM JAPAN AND MALAYSIA, HAD SOUGHT TO STRENGTHEN THE ASEAN+3 PROCESS (MUCH ALONG THE LINES OF THE EARLIER EAEC CONCEPT), WHILE SINGAPORE REMAINED OPPOSED TO SUCH ACTION. HE CLAIMED THAT THE ONLY DISCUSSION OF THE SPRATLEYS DURING THE ASEAN+3 MEETING CAME WHEN CHINA AND THE PHILIPPINES SEPARATELY EXPRESSED HOPES FOR THE CONCLUSION OF A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE REGION. CHI ALSO SAID THAT IN ORDER TO EXPAND ASEAN'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS FURTHER, THE "MYANMAR PROBLEM" WILL HAVE TO BE RESOLVED.

18. (SBU) CHI RATED THE MEETINGS AS "FULLY SUCCESSFUL" AND NOTED THAT VIETNAM WAS "FULLY SATISFIED." HE GAVE GOOD MARKS TO BRUNEI'S ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP. THE ONLY GLITCH CAME DURING THE LAO PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS, MOST OF WHICH FOR SOME REASON WERE NOT TRANSLATED SO THE OTHER LEADERS COULD NOT UNDERSTAND HIM.  
PORTER

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